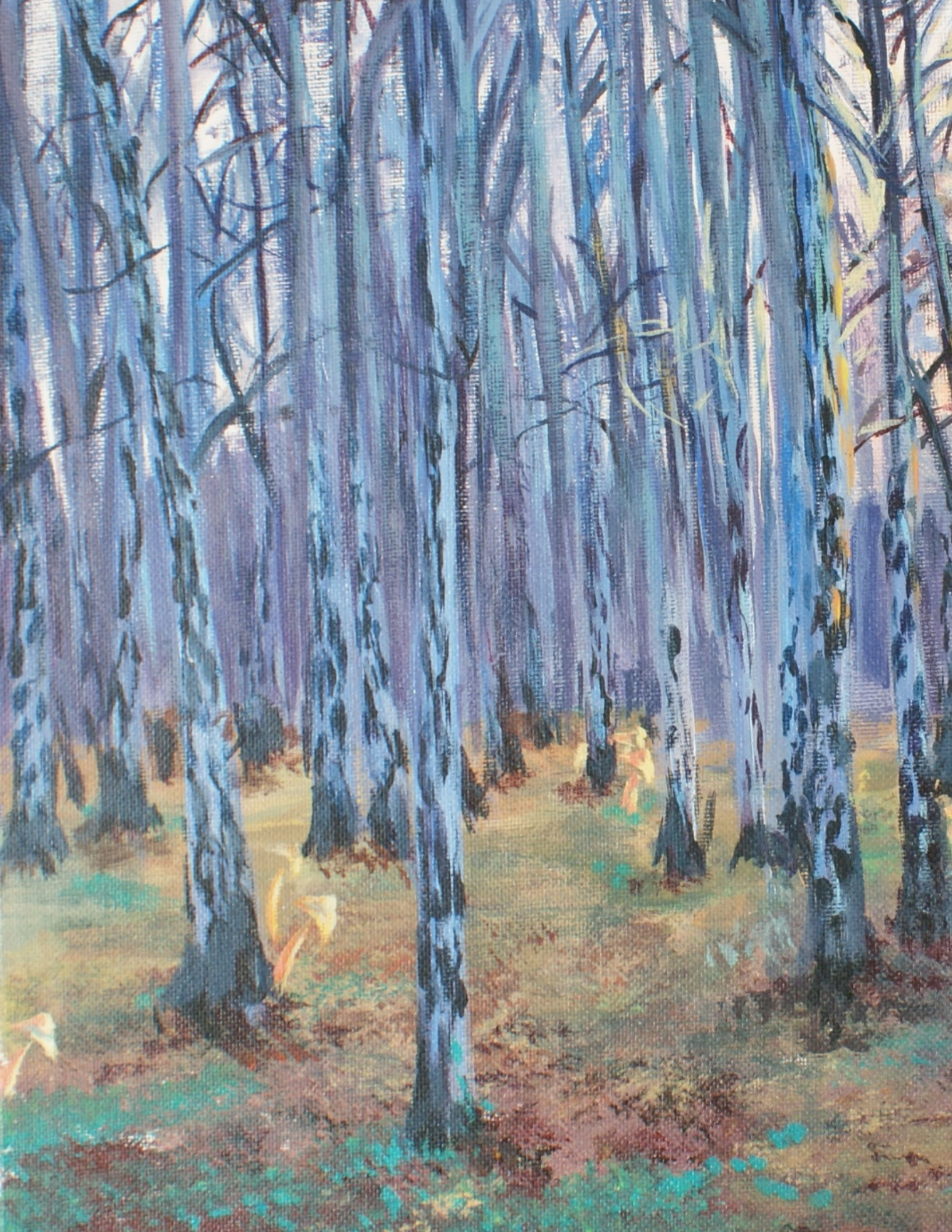




the register

SPRING 2009



the *register*

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2009

The Register is published twice a year by the students of the Boston Latin School. Students in Classes I through VI are invited to submit their original writing and artwork. Pieces are selected by the Editorial Board of *The Register* on the basis of quality, not name recognition; the writers of all pieces remain anonymous to the Editorial Board during the selection process to ensure that no one is given an unfair advantage.

The Register

SPRING 2009

BOSTON LATIN SCHOOL
VOLUME CXXX, ISSUE II

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Face Front

A faceless doll is an item sold in the Dominican Republic. It is faceless to represent all peoples and all cultures in that country, and unite them all into one figure. The dolls are often holding flowers, which are representative of flower-vendors in the country.

I wear my heart on my sleeve. I wear my emotions on my face. I am an actor; I am a liar. There is no shame in such honesty, is there?

Routine has never been a problem for me; what is this need for such drastic change? When a new day comes, my shirt is marked with that day's name. When a new mood comes, my mask is marked with that emotion. I see no good from such secrecy of one's intentions, and so I switch masks like any normal person should.

How else would anybody know what lies in your heart?

In one of my country's plays, a Dominican boy and that same boy, grown up, are at the forefront. The difference between the two is not their clothes, or their demeanor: in fact, I never noticed a difference in hair color until a friend told me. The only difference I noticed was in their clothing, a blood-red color on the boy and a guarded white on the man. And doesn't that truly epitomize the innocence of a child? His mind, his heart open for all to see? That, I believe, is the way I want to live my life: not necessarily naïve, but perhaps more honest and sincere, more engaged in the world. I ended up with a mask of happiness, but more like satisfaction, when the curtain went down.

It's safe to say that my life changed; in fact, my life turned a whole 360° when I met Lily. Her name reminded me of flowers, and of the women on the streets, poor and hungry, selling them. She often sold them after school when her mother was too sick to go out, screaming louder than any of the other women to entice customers. It was my grandmother's birthday, and I wanted to get her a bouquet of flowers to go with the gift I already had. I had no idea where to start, but it wandered towards the back of my mind as I took my daily walk down towards the beach. That's when I heard her.

"Flowers! Buy your flowers here! Roses! Daffodils! Daisies! Petu —"

She turned around, stopped, and looked surprised to see me —like she didn't ever really expect any customers. She complimented my hat. I thanked her, but I guess my tone of voice scared her into silence. That or my mask: this time, of apathy. Lest she lose a customer, right?

"I have to buy a flower. For my grandmother. Do you have any suggestions?"

"Well, if it's cost that you're worried about, we have a lot of orchids or if you want to be more





Sunrise, acrylic
Margarita Krylova, I

romantic, you could get these new black ros —”

“I told you that I was getting it for my grandmother, didn’t I?” Annoyance.

“Right. I’m sorry. Yeah...I don’t know.” She was flustered. I felt kind of bad.

My mask switched over to patience. I was pretty sure I needed a lot of it with her. I asked her, “Well, which are your favorite?”

“You’d trust me? You just met me!” she shouted, with the widest smile I had ever seen. People started staring at this girl, unusually vibrant in the sea of merchants’ cries.

And I guess I stared at her, too. I guess I was taken aback by her warmth. She radiated a sort of energy, like the Sun had found its way into a human body, and shone through. We talked for a half-hour. I mean, I had already picked out the flowers. Her favorites were light pink lilies. But, well, after that, we started talking about nothing: how rapidly our mothers could yell at us in Spanish, or how quickly our geometry teacher (it turns out we had the same one) could get off-track. Patience turned to interest into happiness into something I couldn’t name. She must have gotten scared. She must have seen a blank mask.

It was awkward for a moment.

I told her it was getting late, and the sun was setting so I had to go off to dinner at home. But while we were saying Grace, I couldn’t think of anything else. Her hair looked as soft as silk and her smile seemed contagious. But I had no happiness on my mask. I was confused, and I quickly switched to uncertainty.

An actor must never be flustered. He must never forget his lines, or his cues, or his entrances. But here, I had no idea how to control the situation. I was alone onstage, without a single mask at my arsenal. My mind had become empty, grasping for thoughts. Where was my prompter now?

Lily bought me a faceless doll. I didn’t know what to say: my face was blank, just like it was when I first met her. But the only difference was that a smile formed on its façade.

I can’t help it when my heart finds itself on my sleeve.

I ended up getting the girl.

—Andy Vo, III





[Untitled], watercolor
Kristina Tamutyte, I

caught

The rain
Revealed the truth of her beauty, that
It was really a naïve façade of ugliness
That had cracked to form large gaping holes
Through which a wild, essentially mortal vitality could burst,
Crackling softly at the edges
And rolling crashing into itself like
The white foam horses that gallop at the fringe of mournful waves.
Her eyelashes screamed virgin saint but
Her shoulders murmured tales of a grating desperate sinner;
She was caught between intoxicatingly rich glints of red and blue and green
And the gritty strength of a hundred decaying gargoyles.
Head tipped back, fingers stretched wide
She drowned in the rain,
Her body an endearing mockery of star-crossed lovers,
Rotting seductively
In a city of grayish unclaimed hopes.

— Ella Mahony, III





Boundary Waters, acrylic on canvas paper
Lily Liu-Krason, IV

❧ Fountain of Youth ❧

Travis Pierce burst into the house without knocking on the door. Little Katy, still in her dressing gown, dashed upstairs.

“John!” Travis shouted. “John, come quick!”

“What’s going on?” John Arthur demanded, hurrying down the stairs up which Katy had just disappeared.

“I found it, John,” Travis breathed.

“What? You don’t mean...” John said. “Come...come into the study, Travis.” John sat down at his desk and Travis seated himself across from his old friend. John lit the lamp. The study was dark—all the windows were blocked by bookshelves. “All right, show me,” John said excitedly.

Travis pulled from his bag a large metal box. From around his neck, he took a silver key strung on a piece of twine. Travis fitted the key in the lock and opened the box...

“Dammit, Pierce,” John said, throwing himself backwards in his leather chair. “I thought you’d found the water! This is just another old book.”

“Another old book!” exclaimed Travis in horror. “John, with this book, we’ve practically *got* the water already! You have no idea how hard this was to get. I practically had to sell my soul to buy it from the old vendor. As it was, I pretty much had to sell everything else I owned.”

“I hope it was worth it,” said John.

“Oh it was. Look at this.” Travis carefully removed the book from its velvet-lined box, dropping it gently onto the desk. It let up a little puff of dust. The book was obviously very old.

“May I?” asked John, putting on a pair of eyeglasses. Travis waved his hand to give his friend permission. The book opened with a creak at John’s careful touch. “I’ve never seen this language before,” John said, staring at the strange pictograms. “And I flatter myself in knowing more than most.”

“The words don’t matter,” Travis said. He opened the book to its back cover. It was covered in a picture drawn in brown ink. “This was added later. And the writing’s Latin, not Indian. Can you read *that*?”

“*The Ides of April*—April 15th—1599. That’s after Ponce de Leon!” John exclaimed, looking up at Travis. “*I write this in Latin, the universal language*...Not so true anymore,” said John with a laugh. “I can’t believe you bought this without even being able to read it, Travis!”

“A map written in blood?” laughed Travis Pierce. “What else could it be?”

“This is blood?” asked John, wrinkling his nose. “Yech. But let’s see,” he continued translating,



"...I am setting out on a journey today, a journey I have been planning my entire life. I trust this is a safe place to keep a copy of my map—no one bothers to read my books! I set off for the Fountain tomorrow. If any are able to find my map, I trust they are worthy to enjoy eternity. — Diego del Tempi." John finished reading and looked up. "How do you know this map is any good, Travis? There have been dozens of maps that say they lead to the Fountain of Youth."

"Yes. But how many show Florida as a peninsula?" demanded Travis with a smile, jabbing his finger at the book. "All the Spaniards thought Florida was an island. But this map is an accurate drawing of the American coastlines."

"You're right!" John exclaimed, pulling out a magnifying glass and squinting at the faded drawing. "Travis," he said, laughing, "I think we might actually have found it!"



"He who drinks of my water never shall grow old," John Arthurs translated. This time it wasn't from Latin, it was a much older language. John and Travis stood before the Fountain of Youth in an overgrown clearing in the middle of the Floridian forest. The words were written on a large stone basin in which was a pool of clear water. On the stone was a red stain, but it was otherwise undamaged by time or age.

Both men ran forward and fell to their knees before the fountain. With their hands they scooped up some of the water and slurped it greedily before it all ran out through their fingers. John wiped his mouth with his sleeve and got to his feet with trembling knees.

"What are we going to do now, Travis?" he asked, his voice cracking with excitement. "We are going to be young forever!"

"What are we going to do?" Travis scoffed. "We're going to sell it, that's what we're going to do."

"Sell the waters of Youth?" asked John in disbelief. "Travis, we can't. This is eternity we're dealing with."

"Do you have any idea how much money I spent just getting here? I do not intend to spend my eternity a pauper, Arthurs."

"These waters are not yours to sell! And I certainly don't intend to spend the rest of the world surrounded by disgusting pigs who are greedy for the waters of Youth. Starting with *you*, Travis Pierce!" John pulled a knife from his belt and lunged at Travis, stabbing his knife into his friend's heart.

Travis, larger than John, shoved the man off him. John's head smashed into the stone basin and his blood added another stain to its rim and colored the waters red. Meanwhile, Travis collapsed to the ground, the knife lodged firmly in his chest.

The forest was quiet. Both men lay dead. The water in the fountain slowly cleared itself again. Its words were true: None who drank of the Fountain's waters ever grew old.

—Emily Mayer, I





Before Sunset, watercolor
Hoai Le, I

Lazy Love

Oh we'll burn the oceans in your eyes
I've got miles and hours to swim through.
And we'll count green gashes in the skies
You've got seconds and headaches to live to.

Spin me round your crooked mind
With all these clocks still left to waste.
To find our hearts are stuck in time
With all those days still left to taste.

Oh we'll climb, so tired, on to shore
We've got minutes and weekends to sleep through.
And for every cloud of birds we'll find two more
We have years of time to laze to.

—Adriana Lasso-Harrier, III



Corn Casserole

You might never read this. In a way, I want you to somehow stumble upon it one day. I want you to read this and maybe bring a tear to your eye, because I know that we might not say it that much to one another, but I love you.

I'm going to miss you, when you're gone, or when I venture off to college, I'll miss you. But I hope that you'll think of me at random moments every now and then, like when you hear a song on the radio (maybe Blondie's "Heart of Glass" and how we used to laugh at the lyrics like "it was a gas"). Maybe you'll see a puzzle in a store one day, and remember how we used to sit on a rug in the basement doing puzzles with dolphins, dragons, and beautiful islands with dazzling sunsets. We could stay for hours during winter break, talking about everything important and nothing at all, sipping hot cocoa and laughing at silly mistakes we made. I know that I'll remember cooking with you, or watching you cook. When I eat chicken or spaghetti, I'll think of how you used to make egg noodles out of leftovers, or turkey casserole after Thanksgiving. I'll remember the corn casserole that you made every Christmas ("one can of Campbell's cream of mushroom soup, three cups of rice—but only half cooked; the egg will cook the rest in the oven...")

Sometimes I wonder about the future. I think about where I'll live when I'm married and how long it is until that day comes. I wonder what you want me to do with my life, or what you wish you had done differently with yours. I wonder why it is that we don't talk as much lately, and what you think about after you finish eating dinner and just zone out, hands clasped on the table, a distant look in your eyes. I wonder if I can help, if I can make anything better, anything at all.

Lately I've been thinking about the past, though. I've been pondering all the ways I've wronged you, or all the times that I've broken your heart. I've thought about how much I used to fight with my brother, and how much I still do. I've been wondering if there was ever one thing in particular that just really made us both crack; something so terrible that you might never forget it, like a ghost in the back of your mind at all times. I wonder if you will always carry the burden of my mistakes with you. I'm sorry if there ever was something, if there still is something. I'm sorry... I'm so sorry...

I'm not really sure how to end this since our time isn't over yet. I'm afraid of how it might end, so I'm trying to drag out the middle for as long as I can. I guess that I'm not really, 100%, completely ready to let go of your pants' leg just yet. There are days when I wish I could be five again and cry as you drop me off at kindergarten, but those days are long gone. I don't know if this all makes much sense, but I guess that the one thing that I'm trying to say is that, well, I love you, Mom, and I always will. I love you so much, and I just wanted you to know that. I love you.

—Anonymous





Ryan, acrylic
Cynthia Poon, I

Divinity

The Crown of Denmark where 'I' is Gertrude and 'you' are Claudius

My mother told me that I would never make a good wife.
She was right.

Do you remember when we first met? You were five years old. You asked me to marry you – all dimples and curls – and I said yes, not knowing that our story had already been written; our lives already lived.

My mother told me that I would never make a good wife, because I was born to be a queen. My prospects were high and my aspirations drove them higher. I have spent my life reaching for the crown. When I was younger, I mistakenly believed that I had control over my own destiny. My life was mine to live.

The crown.
The crown will be the death of us all.

Sinners and Saints where 'I' is Claudius, 'She' is Gertrude, and 'He' is the Late Hamlet

I would do anything to make her happy. Staining the snow with my own flesh and blood, because I promised her a kingdom, I promised her a kingdom with a different king. It's dark and the moon is dim tonight, but I can still see him. The late Hamlet, the dead Hamlet. He's quiet now and although he never talked too much; his silence is deafening. My brother, my king. I have guarded him for all my life, his crown, his son, his kingdom And yet, it was with my own hands that I have slain my one and only brother. It is the most grotesquely unnatural death to be killed by someone you love who loves you.

I have lost more than my conscience, I have lost my soul.
God have mercy on the souls of great sinners.

When I tell her, she doesn't cry. She sits, frozen. Her face pale with shock, contrasting beautifully with her crimson lips – like blood blooming over fresh snow – a familiar image. I have lost my heart, my youth, my soul in the name of love. Am I happy? My triumph fills my mouth with ashes and I cannot taste any sweetness in victory. Her eyes cross mine. They are more beautiful than I could have imagined. Are you happy, Gertrude?

The Crown of Denmark where 'I' is Gertrude, 'You' are Claudius, and 'He' is Hamlet

I lied to you.
Do you still trust me?



I'm sorry. If I tell you the truth now, will you listen? How could you not have known? I always thought you knew. You were always so kind and I assumed it was as clear to you as it was to me. He is my son. But yours too. Bound of ties thicker than blood. The deepest red, the deepest bond.

You tell me. "We must send him away."

No. Wait.

"He knows too much."

And you do not know enough.

"He doesn't understand."

It's better this way.

You leave. Your wine is left untouched. This is the end, I believe. This was never the end I dreamed it would be but I am happy, because it is my ending. It's better this way. Don't leave. But it doesn't matter. We are already bound together by the rite and ritual of the court. Our stories have already been written. Queens never live for themselves; their life is devoted to her people. Day by day. May the sun shine on another day.

Sinners and Saints where 'I' is Claudius, 'She' is Gertrude, and 'He' is Hamlet

"And will you kill me now, boy?"

"You killed my father. You made the choice for me."

"He was not the man you believe him to be."

"I will not listen to your lies. He was a good man."

"Yes. He was. I never wanted to hurt him. But some things you cannot control. You simply act and hope that things will work out. Listen to reason."

"I am past reason." He draws his sword. "I respected you. I love you like you were my father. I thought you were a great man! But that man is dead. You killed him the night you killed my father. You are dead to me; a walking corpse. I cannot let you keep walking. If this is the last thing I do, so be it- an act of God."

"You have your entire life ahead of you. There is no reason for it to end now."

His aim is true and I stagger and fall. But how could I hurt this man when I cannot see him as a man; only an over-grown boy in temper who doesn't understand and doesn't want to understand what has been in front of him all along.

Who bought him his first pony? Who taught him to fence? Who used to carry him though the fields and swan with him in the lake? Not my brother, the king – I raised him. He is my son. It is only now that I see it?

He is silent now as the poison corrodes his remaining strength. He will pass soon. The good almost always die young. They are too blessed to be part of this wretched place. It's dark now as it has always been. I close my eyes.

"Oh, Hamlet. Hamlet, my son."



He doesn't respond, but I think he's heard and maybe now he'll know.

The Crown of Denmark where 'I' is Gertrude, 'You' are Claudius, and 'He' is Hamlet

My kingdom is in ruins. How can I go on? My husband and my son are fighting. How can I lose my own flesh and blood? How can I lose my soul? I cannot live without my heart. I cannot exist without my soul. Our lives are so messy and broken and we live, we live to forget what we have done and who we have lost. Who will lose. No one stays in the end. Don't go.

I grasp the chalice you filled with wine. Sweet, sweet misery. Please help me forget.

"To the crown." My last breath will be wasted on you.

So concludes all tragic love stories. Happiness in the marriage is fleeting. Love transcends logic and reason so often you fall on one object and then quite suddenly land on something else entirely. Our human memory is so fragile and fractured. But ambition lives on. And with it *we* live on.

We live. We love. We die.
The rest is history.

—Lisa Wang, II





My Waterfront, watercolor, Micron pen
Melissa Richi, I

Tacit Velleity

The moment my eyes met hers,
The moment her aroma became my scent,
I knew she was the apocalypses to my days of solitude.
Her flesh, though pale as the crescent moon,
Yet was pure as the virgin snow.
Her eyes, though dark, yet bright,
Were the only that may piece my torpid thoughts.
Her smile, luminous, audacious, cherubic,
Ceases my thoughts and germinate my desires.
My mind, withered by turpitude,
My thoughts, pained and conquered by anguish,
May be exhumed by her solemn words.
My life, an ancient, indomitable forest of grief,
Hewed by failure, burned by anguish,
Can be replenished by her fountain of youth.
She was the brightest flower of the festoon,
My emotions, presented to her like a rose,
Yet the loveliest rose possesses thorns.
She was more than a creation of God,
She was her companion,
Yet I am but a mere mortal,
My body though strong, was of clay and sin.
I may only lay and watch,
As those silver thorns of bloody rose,
Lie crushed and broken on the virgin snow.

—Andy Moy, IV





[Untitled], photograph
Alex Dorgan, II

Words of a Mother

When the blossom grows,
And the buds on stems start to unfurl,
Promise to guide me through the park,
Tell me that you are still my little girl.

A gurgle becomes a giggle,
A wail becomes a cry,
I always thought the child in you,
Would never wilt, would never die.

You seemed so helpless,
In this world so vast,
Yet, everyday you are growing,
Must it come so fast?

A kiss, hug, and off to school,
Your cheeks so pink, filled and full,
But now, no more kisses, no more hugs,
It penetrates the depth of my very soul.

Don't you realize what you are doing?
Why do you see right through my pain?
Yet my daughter you have not wronged,
And my love for you will never change.

Thus, when the blossom grows,
And the buds on stems start to unfurl,
Promise to guide me through the park,
Tell me that you are still my little girl.

—Dawn Truong, VI



lie to me.

I wandered around town again. I dropped some loose change on the pavement as I walked by your house. The next day at school, you returned three nickels, a dime, and seven pennies to me. They fell on my desk with the sound of silver—of a sliver of something new. I'm not sure how you knew it was mine, or if you knew it was mine at all, but I pocketed the money all the same.

I measured myself again. I'm only 156 centimeters tall. You told me how much that was in inches, because I couldn't possibly begin to figure it out. I never liked the metric system anyway, and you're good at figuring that kind of stuff out—I never was. You swore the tape measure lied, and you did it over for me. You told me I was a good five centimeters taller than that and that I must have just done it wrong. I did it again the next day at home. You lied. But you never once looked down, and so I just kept looking up.

I had nothing to eat for lunch again. The cafeteria made my nose grumble with sounds from my stomach. You said your mom packed you some strawberries and you didn't really like them anyway, so it was perfectly fine that I could have them, and that I didn't really need to feel bad about it, so I should have just taken the strawberries in the first place and eaten them without another word. I did. When I finished, you told me that you were allergic to strawberries and hated the smell of them. Dude, I saw that you ate strawberry ice cream at lunch the next day. But you forgot about your story, and I forgot about my starvation.

I left without shaving again. I could have sworn my other friends all laughed at me, but you just smiled. You told me it looked fine. You led my hand to your face. You told me that you had stubble, too, couldn't I see it? I didn't feel anything.

I ran out of Chapstick again. My lips were dry in the winter cold. You liked them anyway. But you didn't say it. I didn't need you to say it. I just needed you to be there. See, you tasted like strawberries. We laughed when we saw our breath; it was that cold. It's so trivial, really. You reminded me of days waiting for the school bus with my dad, when we would compete to see who could breathe the longest; and you reminded me of security; and you reminded me of family. I always won those competitions. You told me that I tasted like air. I felt air.

Really, I felt so much. I felt an energy lifting me up from my toes, and I felt the very ends of my body going higher. You lifted me up so many times that I never once felt that I could fall. I felt my toes tingling like they were asleep, but I was awake the entire time. My eyes were opened against the bright lights: I never once turned them off. I felt the marrow in my bones and the muscles in my arms. I felt you inside me, changing me with no regard for my feelings, but changing me nevertheless. I felt growing pains without the pain. I felt it all without the pain.



Things have changed since then. I have grown those five centimeters. You have grown a beard. I have written letters of ink into my bloodstream. You have written letters from Seattle, less and less and gone. I skinned my knees on the way down, but I placed band-aids on them after a while.

You know, I don't think you know how much you have helped me grow since then. And I don't think you know how much you have helped me love since then. I'm a better man now. And for that, I thank you. You have forgotten me, and I have kept the memories I need to be okay.

I'm okay.

—Andy Vo, III





Blood Opera, Copic markers, Micron pen
Emily Chen, IV

Exit Scene

How precious this abstract yet physical existence is.

Words.

Expressed through movements and through speech, words are the foundation of our lives. We, humans, are constantly swayed by words. Intertwining between them to form a small part of our characters. A precious component to form the blueprint of our personalities. Words are used to harm. Words are used to heal. Words are what confirm our existence.

Existence to us is what really matters.

Words wrap themselves around us. Just to form an invisible cocoon of undefined threads. In the end, it is what impacts us that determine who we really are. The forms of words we learn from are what determine a part of our character. Sentences. Quotes. Conversations. Contact. Never-ending in these corrupted currents launched in this abyss of time.

Looking back, words can be used as weapons; words can be used as bandages for wounds. A fatalistic balance of detrimental and therapeutic words. However, words only take effect with its wielder and the wielder's personality. The wielder being humane or being inhumane.

"All the world is a stage and all the men and women merely players..." -William Shakespeare

Their manipulation sets the stage.

"Isn't that what friends are for?" Writing of the script with practiced hands.

"You're *censored* annoying." Stereotypical antagonist emerges.

"If only it wasn't a matter of just grades, but more on learning, that's what education should really mean." Wise actor enters the stage.

Sugar coated tones. "Oh nooooo, you'll be fine, don't worry!" Conspiracy develops from a supposed 'protagonist'.

"You're really ugly." The actor goes into custom disguise, shielding both appearance and intentions from view.

"I don't care. Whatever." Antagonist spies Protagonist.

"I appreciate you even if you feel no one else does." The quill halts.

"Just know that I'll always be your friend and you can trust me." Unexpected profound plot



twist. The actor re-emerges.

“-because I know what it feels like when someone DOESN’T and I want to find someone who does care...” Halting, the actor falls on their knees. Warm tears dash the complexion.

Recollection of emotions. “I was WORRIED.” Teardrop falls on the script.

“It’s hard not to care.” Conspiracy falters.

“I’m glad to be friends with you.” Last teardrop falls, one single streak of ink.

“In the end, it’s all about surviving. Hey, you survived.” Quill halts and scribbles the final act.

Silence. Revelation. Scenes start to transition.

Finale.

“It doesn’t matter, like I said, it’s all just an act.” Coexisting actors bow.

Curtains close.

Consistently entrapped in words. So obvious. Yet we’re all so insecure. Trying to seek ourselves, expressing ourselves, through the possessions we have called ‘words’. How fleeting, so evanescent. Our existence, how much are we remembered through the words we use?

Existence is intertwined with the introduction. Even in the title of any scene.

Our words determine who we are and how we wish to establish ourselves.

It’s simple. With an introduction. Movement or words. A mere prologue.

“Hello.”

The actor dons on the mask again.

—Cecilia Kwong, III





[Untitled], photograph
Lydia Souroufis, I

Ribbon

Everyone croons,
“I’m sorry for your loss,”
But you didn’t lose her;
Because you’re absolutely sure
She’s coming back.
You can hear her laugh,
See her smile,
Feel her hand in yours,
And smell her skin:
Dove soap, ink, cinnamon,
And something that’s just so deliciously her.

She’s coming back.
You know she is.

You finger the silk ribbon that was always in her hair.
She told you once,
“Wherever this ribbon is, you’ll find me;
We’re a package deal!”
Then she laughed, winked, and squeezed your hand
As if you were her private accomplice in some
Wickedly sweet crime.

The smooth ribbon weaves through your fingers.
It’s here;
Why isn’t she?
You lift it to your nose.
She’s coming back.
You inhale.
You know she is.
Dove soap, pencil shavings, cinnamon.
Where is she?
It smells Divine.

—Lian Parsons, VI





Kevaan, photograph
Mariah Harrington, II

La roue tourne

I could only feel her hands as they violently grabbed me by the forearms since I had shut my eyes in anticipation for what she would do to me. I then felt myself falling backwards and felt the hard and rough surface of the granite countertop cut a gash into the side of my forehead.

I was still conscious and sitting up against the counter, my palms pressed against the sides as if trying to find some tangible support to hold on to. I then felt hands grab hold of my hair, her grasp pulling on my scalp. I could feel the gash widening as she did this and I screamed out in pain. I didn't shut my eyes this time since she took me by surprise and hurled me against the cabinets under the sink. The blood oozed from my gash and seeped through my shirt.

I rolled over, away from her. My vision began to blur and the gash began to sear. Crying made the pain from my forehead unbearable, but I couldn't stop. The pain was too overwhelming that I felt myself slowly lose consciousness. I felt her hands wrap around my ankles, but I was too weak to struggle, to fight against her. For a woman approaching middle age she still had some fight left in her as if she had been saving it for those who truly cross her path without looking the other way before jumping onto it.

And then, I heard his voice, as it awakened my senses for a brief moment, above all the voices of those rushing into the kitchen now. They had heard my cries and tried to free me from her grip. The elder one yanked her hands from my ankles while he, the younger, pulled me away from her. He knelt on the ground and held me close to him, for the first time in the week since our elopement.

I could hear her yelling and screaming that she wanted to kill me for trying to marry above my status, for trying to entrap her son, and for ever stepping a foot into her house. I turned away from the noise and into his chest, burying my face and smelling the faint smell of the aftershave on his neck. He held me tight as if afraid of letting me go would result in my death.

When I could no longer hear her, he asked my friend, the elder maid of the house to call an ambulance. He asked the younger maid, the one who took my position after I was fired, to get some ice to press against my forehead. He then pulled my head back and tried moving the hair away from my face, but I winced from the pain that resulted. He then softly tried to touch the tender skin around the gash. I felt his body sag, feeling sorry when I was willing to absolve him of ever being at fault. He then pressed me closer to his chest. I heard his voice tremble as he apologized again and again, for ever marrying me only to rid the woman he truly loved from his mind, for pushing me to do so when we both knew he couldn't return the love I had for him, for thrusting me into his house as his wife without truly fearing what his mother is capable of, for not doing anything to make everything better.

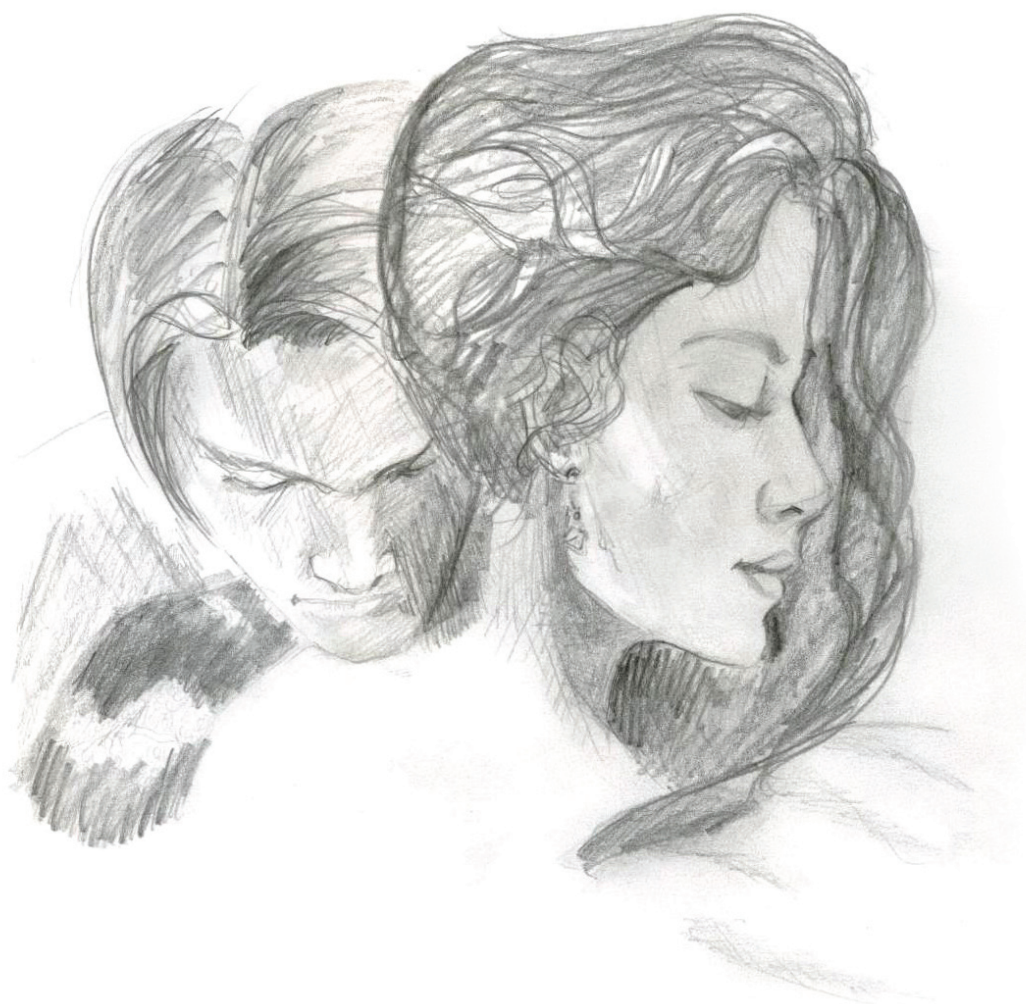
I tried to look at him but the blood kept trickling into my eye and the other one was blurry



without the addition of the blood so I placed my palm gently against his cheek, trying to let him feel the tenderness and unconditional love I felt for him. I felt the roughness of the hair bristles on his cheek and the wetness of a few tears. He calmed at my touch and took my palm in his hand and kissed it tenderly, thinking that would hurt me as well. I simply placed my fingertips on his lips to close them and nestled myself closer to him. He responded and held me tighter in his arms.

In that brief moment of feeling content for the first time since our first and only kiss as husband and wife, I slipped into unconsciousness, faintly hearing him yell into my ear and something cold press against my forehead.

—Enid Franco, I



[Untitled], pencil
Sherry Wu, II





Crew, watercolor, Micron pen
Melissa Richi, I

Rain Appreciation Week

If you cannot appreciate the rain
Then you cannot appreciate the sun
Gurgling and laughing, or driving down hard
Drizzling, blathering, going on and on
The rain has about a million moods
It can be happy or grouchy
Or that feeling you get when you hit your funny bone—
You almost want to laugh
But maybe cry as well
The sun only has a few moods
Sultry, bubbly
Distant
Maybe it'll be gentle
And caress your aching bones
But that only happens during summer romance break ups
Or to world weary old men who sip lemonade in hammocks and sigh about the good old days

Rain is much more interesting

—Hannah Rigg, I



Head Above Water

I trip on my way up from you,
clothes stretched out, misplaced
around my body
facial features used, blurred
like breath on a window
through which I look out at things imagined.
The speed chokes this moment back,
strangles it from my vision,
so that later when I try to recall our time together
I can barely disentangle it from my own myth.

From my own myth I draw myself.
I am generous.
I grant myself wings, scales, two sets of eyelids.
There are new dimensions, labyrinths, worlds
I can scrutinize under protected eyes.
I grant myself a haven, from you, from actuality.
You disintegrate from importance, as I grow stronger.

Stronger being a relative term, I am exceptional
at balancing rain drops on my tongue,
air between my words,
time at my heels.
I have a certain relationship with gravity.
He allows me three inches of levitation from the floor,
so when you drag me under
it is less dramatic than it sounds.
You drag me to a mortal, scientific level,
a level I despise, but cannot escape.

Escape, a most difficult trade to conquer,
I have been played a fool in its wake
countless times.

But you, you and your expertise,
you swim through my ghostly fingers,
staying only when you please
chipping confidence from my bones
as you go.

There are gaps in my grasp.



In my grasp I hold on to what I can handle.
In my grasp I hold on to what I can handle.
You laugh, "Where are you going?"
As if someone of my caliber
would have a definite answer
to that particular question.
Well this time, I do.
"Out on my own, above you."
I smile, and still not quite perfect,
I trip on my way up from you.

—Maya Nojehowicz, III





Old Pier (5), photograph
Olivia Schwob, II



Boston at Night, photograph
Bryn Keane-Farrell, II

The (t)ides of Mortal Men

Let it paint a smoother picture across the fissures in your spine
Let it wander in your galleries and siphon all your wine
Let there never be a comfort in the comfort of knowing why
I despise, I despise everything that flies.
But, if I am a perversion of anything sublime
What harm is there in berating the idle passerby?
“Do you realize your life is ending one tick at a time?”
For I despise, I do despise all these mortal eyes
And I despise, I do despise all these mortal lives
And my demise, my demise will be without knowing why
Every tick my idle heart logs is one tick off sublime.
Though, if all the things that fly are flocking this way through the sky
And all the things that run herd a certain way through the rye
And all the things with conscience are collecting just between my eyes
I don’t suppose I’d ever know why they’d ever need to die,
Or why the ticks of their mighty hearts so greatly outmatch mine
Or even when the floods come, will it leave them kind
Or even how their bodies will decompose with time...
But that is all that I can say, and at the least, it’s mine
To dampen, and to ruin, and to paint smooth across your spine.

—Faith Zeng, II



CANTINA

Today was dustier,
And the bar was bare-bones empty, a vulture several days without a meal
Only the oldest ones were coming now, while the wanderers stayed away
They were dusty, these old ones, and dry like desert bones
They came as if to fight against the sucking wind,
Most hardly a fight. That one
One of the younger older ones, not as dry
Still shining around the eyes, with wet teeth
His throat could open, if nothing else,
Poor bastard.
He wasn't as dry yet,
Not depraved,
And he could remember days like an empty bottle, when there was someone listening
He couldn't remember anything else, hair or hands or name,
Only that he had said something, and they had listened.
The glasses clacked together stiffly and grating;
The dust came carried by the square strokes of sun.
Outside even the cactus was wilting.
And soon, he thought, it will be a proper desert,
The kind that people imagine from where there's snow always and older ones not dry.
There should be music, though, he thought
Something no one cares about anymore.
Or dogs, but even they couldn't bark just now,
Not when it's so damn hot.
He looked over the oldest older ones,
Growing up from chairs growing up from the floor, like trees born dead.
Their shirts were thin but rigid,
And underneath a crumbling city's worth of hip-bones,
A vast and candid loneliness.

—Olivia Schwob, II





No Face, Sharpie, Copic markers, pencil
Ashley Hernandez, IV



Daylight, photo negative
Sam Ho, II

Symphony

In response to removing music from our curriculum. Congratulations to those who were saved.

Early morning
Seven A.M.
The soft lilting vibrato of a serenade
Permeates the empty halls
The dark room fills with the color of sound
Rushing through the breezes of snow
Causing the flakes to waltz to static sound,
Mourning the inevitable.
The keys join in attempting to cheer
Yet can only contribute minor chords
Of lust
Of despise
Of despair
The keys stick
But no one's there to fix it
The duet soon becomes a trio
Brass wails its pining song
Crying for another
Begging for redemption
But no one's there to hear
Timpani roll its pronouncement
Chimes ring their death toll
The cymbals end it all...
But the symphony is all-alone
There is no one left to hear it
No one left to play it
Their pleas fall upon deaf ears
And the music dies away
Leaving dusty instruments
In the empty hallways...

—Ashley Winkfield, II





[Untitled], colored pencil
Kwonateisha Hills, II

Parable of the Madman

The man in the corner sweats. Perspiration forms a thin sheen over his face; bright lights burn a hole in his forehead. Shaking slightly, he wrings his hands, rubs his moustache, and leans out of his hard wooden chair with nervous anticipation. As the crowd begins to clap politely, signaling the end of the last speech, the man jolts out of his chair and steps up to the stage with a sudden rigidity. His back is wet, his face is wet, and his hands slide on the steel railing as he makes his way up. As he steps up behind the podium, a wild commotion erupts. They have all stood up for him, eyes reflecting the white-blue lights of the hall, and are waiting. His hands finally still. The man knows that they have come to see him, he knows what they expect of him, and he knows that he cannot fail them. A silence falls over the hall and it is as if each member of the audience is at gunpoint, too scared to speak, yet barely able to control the reckless and bold temptation to make a sound, any sound.

The man looks out, and all he sees is a massive blurry landscape of dots, colorful pinpoints on the canvass of a frameless impressionist painting. His entire world swells up as he inhales the color and listens carefully to the deafening roar of the silence echo off the walls. Every second elongates. A young university student in his blue jacket leans forward. A fountain pen dangles between his fingers and for a millisecond, as he senses it slipping through, panic sweeps through his body, sending an electric shiver down his spine until it reaches his pen and it...drops. This is just the cue the man on stage has been waiting for. And now he speaks.

He begins harmlessly enough. One might consider him a pleading man, one who does nothing other than beg and persuade with the most convincing earnestness. He speaks as a representative, a citizen, one who seeks to protect the security of his countrymen. The man's soft voice is reminiscent of the pedagogy of a shriveled old professor; his innocuous words are saturated with reason and morality. The dots before the man begin to shift. A woman leans slightly to the left to whisper to her husband. The student leans back in his electric chair. The man's sweat turns cold, and he hides both hands behind the old wooden podium as they begin to shake involuntarily. They have come to hear him. He knows what they expect of him. Why can't he control himself? Controlling the dotted colors was once simple for him. Now they move and sway by the hundreds right before his eyes. Clenching one fist, his head swells with a fearsome rage. He did not choose these colors, but they will submit to him. The young student tilts his head back, carelessly tracing the paint marks on the ceiling. And the man on stage explodes.

His voice escalates at an incalculable speed and suddenly his hands emerge, casting spells over his wide-eyed audience. Gesturing wildly, his sweat suddenly becomes hot, his hands clenched around some invisible and ludicrous reality that materializes before the stunned crowd. He borders on the edge of insanity as the bluish light forms a pale halo around his head. The man asks a million questions in quick succession. "What kind of future can we provide our children?" "Can you be as selfless as your government?" "Can we stop the menace from the West and the danger from the East?" He is no longer the beggar here. He is the prophet. Jerking his head along with his hands, one can imagine some cruel and very clever being manipulating this



captivating marionette. The young man, eyes wide, follows the speaker's every motion and the pen dangles once again as his grip slowly loosens. Black is added to the dotted image as the oily ink begins to drip onto his pants. "What will you do for your country?" the madman screeches in his hoarse voice, sweat running in rivulets down his illuminated face. Black ink drips. His voice grows louder: "Ein Millionnen!" and the crowd cheers. "Zwei Millionnen!" and the husband steadies his wife as she leaps up in fervid agreement. "Drei Millionnen!" and the young man lets loose an animalistic cry as the pen falls to the ground, forming a pool of black, the smallest dot in the sea of colors. The hall is wild, crazed. The man on stage shakes with righteous fury; electricity runs through his entire body, down the railing, and into the audience. All have risen to accept his challenge. Every single one is shaking, reverberating with indignation, patriotism, and newfound enlightenment.

He suddenly stops. The colors do not. He looks out once again and sees no one. He hears absolutely no one, no silence because he is the king, their leader and Führer. And like the madman, he hears no voice but his own.

He exits, slipping down the icy railing as his legions hail him. He does not hear the announcer's excited voice call out, "Damen und Herren, Adolf Hitler! Thank you, Chancellor."

The pen remains on the ground, forgotten. Every word could be written in black.

—Ada Lin, II





Alice in Wonderland, Sharpie, Prismacolor markers
Emily Chen, IV



